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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/665,676	09/19/2003	James Patterson Bryant	12093/926	6268

26646 7590 08/10/2006

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EXAMINER

SMALLEY, JAMES N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3727

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/665,676

Applicant(s)

BRYANT, JAMES PATTERSON

Examiner

James N. Smalley

Art Unit

3727

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8 and 9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8 and 9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ ~ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1 and 3-6 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montross US 1,059,747 in view of Wheatley US 5,301,913 and in view of Basterfield et al. US 4,411,372.

Montross '747 teaches a clamp comprising a top clamp (7) with a top clamp bolt hole, a base clamp (8) with a threaded base clamp bolt hole (17), a bolt (15), and a lip holding area (9) and (10). The bottom clamp can rotate from the top clamp in the unsecured position about hinge (13). The two clamps combine to form an approximately circular lip holding area.

Montross '747 does not teach the top clamp hole being internally threaded.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide threading in the top hole, motivated by the benefit of better securing a connection between the top clamp and the bolt. Furthermore, Examiner notes the lower hole is provided with threading. The replication of threading in the top hole would comprise no more than a mere duplication of the working parts of the invention. It has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8.

Furthermore, Montross '747 not teach a fitting to accept and secure the bolt.

Wheatley '913 teaches a fitting (62) with internal threading (64) to accept a bolt in a locking clamp. In col. 4, lines 5-11, Wheatley '913 teaches the provision of a threaded fitting allows for a greater clamping strength, as opposed to threads formed directly in the leg (34). It further states that the threads may be formed in the leg (34) if the additional strength is not needed.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the clamp of Montross '747, providing the fitting taught by Wheatley '913, motivated by

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the benefit of providing increased clamping strength. Furthermore, Examiner notes the fitting of the Applicant appears to comprise a separation of a known integral structure, such as that of Montross '747, into separate parts. It has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179.

Furthermore, Montross '747 fails to teach a rounded knuckle on the top part.

Basterfield '372 teaches a clamp for a pressure vessel whereby the top clamp has a rounded knuckle (40) on the bottom surface.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the clamp of Montross '747, providing a rounded knuckle as taught by Basterfield '372, motivated by the benefit of providing hook means to engage behind the rounded flange (3) of Montross '747.

Regarding the limitations whereby the claimed device is to be used for securing a drum lid, Examiner notes the device of Montross '747 is capable of being used in the intended manner, i.e. for securing a drum closure to a drum, because it meets all claimed structural limitations. It has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

Regarding claims 3-4, it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416. Furthermore, it is known to form metallic devices of stainless steel to prevent corrosion around threading which would otherwise impede the insertion of a bolt or screw.

It would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the device of Montross '747 of a strong, highly rigid material such as metal, motivated by the benefit of providing rigidity to the clamp. Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill to form the clamp of stainless steel, motivated by the benefit of preventing rust from forming around the screw threads.

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Regarding claim 5, Montross '747 does not teach the size of the clamp. However, Examiner notes a change in size is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Rose*, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the overall size of the device of Montross '747 such that the bolt diameter would be formed to less than 1 inch, motivated by the benefit of sizing the device to fit varies sized flanges.

Regarding claim 6, the area around the threaded hole is read to be a "hardened seat."

Regarding claim 7, flange member (9) is read to be the rounded knuckle.

3. Claims 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montross US 1,059,747 in view of Wheatley US 5,301,913 as applied above, and further in view of Kunin '687.

Regarding claims 8-9, Montross '747 discloses securing a casket with clamps placed over the drum ring (3) and (4). Examiner reads the burial casket to comprise a "drum." The reference teaches in the second column of page 2 of the Specification, lines 73-77, "Any desired number of clamps 6 may be employed..."

Kunin '687 teaches it is known to secure a lid and container closed with three clamps. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide three, or any other suitable number of clamps taught by Montross '747 to secure the burial casket, as taught by Kunin '687, motivated by the benefit of providing the desired securing strength to seal the casket.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James N. Smalley whose telephone number is (571) 272-4547. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9-6:30, Alternate Fri 9-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Newhouse can be reached on (571) 272-4544. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

jns


NATHAN J. NEWHOUSE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER